

In Memory of  
Ruth Havens Prime



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In Memory of  
Ruth Havens Prime









NEW YORK, DECEMBER, 1898



Ruth Havens Prime



## Note

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These words are written for her near-of-kin and friends who loved her dearly. Many things are written that are not intended for others. If it shall fall under the eyes of others, let them remember that what they might criticize is a sacred memory to us.    ♪   ♪   ♪   ♪   ♪



## A Short, Useful, Completed Life

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### Ruth Havens Prime

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[Second daughter of RALPH E. PRIME and ANNIE RICHARDS-WOLCOTT PRIME, his wife, was born at Yonkers, N. Y., June 1, 1874. Died at Yonkers, N. Y., January 16, 1905.]

Among the strange and inscrutable events in human experience one of the most inscrutable is the taking away from a life of usefulness and of devotion to others, of one who had given herself to a life of ministry to the suffering of her fellows, and whose preparation for such service was only just fully completed when called to lay down the work.

The human heart looks for and yearns to find the explanation, and ever asks "Why"? There is a reason, a good, a wise, reason. We can not know it in this life, yet that yearning to know shall be satisfied, though not here or now. We are content here only in the satisfaction which comes with the restful consciousness that God, who doeth all things well, knows the "Why".

The childhood and young days of RUTH HAVENS PRIME were not altogether different from those of many other young women, and yet they were filled with a sympathy and tenderness and helpfulness for others which, from her earliest years, marked her character and heart as those of a born nurse. From a very child her heart yearned over, and her hands and feet were busy for, any sick in the household. Those acts passed without special remark and were scarcely noticed at the time, but in the memory of those years our hearts recall, not only the now well-remembered child acts, but likewise the gentleness and helpfulness of her young womanhood that told of a nature which found its best and most reasonable outgoing in tender attention to the suffering.

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Among the hundreds of letters received by us during these last days, one recalls her as a little girl, visiting the "babies' ward" of a New York hospital, and going among the babies' beds, from one to another, and talking to and cheering the suffering little ones. She was so touched with the experience that all her young activities were exercised in the successful work of a little girls' fair, planned in her own home and carried out in a neighbor's house by little girls, at which a considerable sum was raised for that charity. It was clear then to all, that her interest was the outgoing of her heart in sympathy for the suffering ones.

We now recall how, when an accident kept for weeks in our home a loved friend, it was RUTH who found that the opportunity to show devoted attention to the sufferer at her bedside, was more attractive than her girl's play and recreations.

Not only for those in actual suffering, but to those deprived of ordinary joys in life, was she sensitive and helpful. We remember also how as a young schoolgirl she absented herself for a long time from the Saturday play of others, to slip away unnoticed to an humble home and read to a blind girl.

Her hands right early learned to make the simple things that tempt the appetite of the sick ones and these she pressed upon them in her home.

Even during the passing away of one in the household it was our little child RUTH who, creeping to the bed of suffering, and behind the pillows, supporting them upon her knees, while the tired and weary head of the dying aunt rested there. How little we then thought of what these things really told of character, and of the beginnings of a life to be developed into supreme capacity for sympathy, helpfulness and usefulness among the suffering ones, for whose cheer God gave her to us.

When the time came for lessons beyond those of the family and the primary school her education went on, first at the Yonkers High School. From time to time in later years, and through these recent days, has come the testimony of her then teachers to the lasting friendships she won from them at that high school, by her mind and







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heart and developing character. From the high school she continued her education at Miss Bliss's Academy for Girls at Yonkers, and there also girl friendships were formed by her which the separation of many years and great distances have never cooled, and her companions still treasure memories of her tenderness and sympathy in their troubles. She had found out in those young years how drear the world is when trouble comes, and a letter recently written tells of her ministry of love among her then schoolmates in their sorrows. She completed her school days at Evelyn College at Princeton, N. J., where she enjoyed the privilege of being taught by the instructors and professors of Princeton University. How well we now recall those days away from home; how she enjoyed her study of Latin and Greek and the sciences, practically going over the same ground pursued by her brothers in the University. Her letters of those years, a diary of her life and experience, are all preserved and are a treasured story. Then came the years at home. They were years of great usefulness, and yet of unrest, for she yearned for earnest doing, the sphere for which she had not yet found.

In the summer of 1896 she went abroad with her father and mother and sisters and spent nearly four months, visiting England, Scotland, France, Germany, Switzerland and Italy.

In the winter of 1899 and 1900 the desire for a larger usefulness and the sense of her yet limited opportunities got hold of her with great earnestness. A nurse by nature, she longed for better knowledge that she might be fitted for greater and better helpfulness and usefulness. The desire took possession of her to pursue a regular course of instruction in the art of trained nursing, and after long deliberation and many family conferences she won the reluctant consent of her parents and sought acceptance as a probationer in the Nurses' Training School of the Presbyterian Hospital in New York City. The regular course of instruction required her entrance upon the hospital course the following May, but she secured permission to postpone that date until the next October in order that she might again accompany her father's family on their regular trip abroad.

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Again, in 1900, with her father and mother and two of her sisters, she went abroad for nearly four months, during which time they visited Palestine, Syria, Asia, Italy, Switzerland, France, England and Wales. She saw and walked about in Jerusalem, Bethlehem and the holy places; in Beyrout, Rhodes, Samos, Constantinople, Athens and Rome, and the other cities of more frequent resort. During those months, in anticipation of her own prospective life-work, she found satisfaction in visiting the hospitals of European cities and the Far East. Her heart tenderly went out to the poor sufferers in those Eastern countries whom she found in the hospitals and dispensaries, particularly at Jerusalem, seeking aid they could only obtain from Europeans and Americans, who there devote themselves to that work among the poor, suffering Arab people; and her wishes were often expressed that she might some day go back again and join in that work.

Returning home late in September, on the very first day of October she began her work as a probationer in the Nurses' Training School of the Presbyterian Hospital in New York City. We well recall what she suffered during those weeks of trial, trained at the outset by the hardest and sometimes the most trying work to make a test of the endurance and devotion necessary to meet in after life any and every possible call that might come in that vocation. But she was equal to it all. The goal was never out of sight to her, and enabled her to meet whatever lay in the path. One of her glad days indeed was that on which she was summoned to the room of the Superintendent, Miss Maxwell, who with words of satisfaction placed upon her head the white cap, the badge of success in the probationary trials and of acceptance into the Training School. As all others who had gone before had done, she gladly signed the nurse's promise to pursue three full years of study, and to render three full years of service to the hospital, and began her work.

They were not years of study and of work only. The ethics of the school forbade any outward fellowship of members of one class with those of another class, but her sweet spirit in unconscious acts and unstudied words, was perforce felt not only upon her own class

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women, but also upon those in the classes above her, as well as in those below her. Some of her most devoted friends were those of the higher classes, who were providentially to feel the cheer of her words and the influence of her kindly spirit and encouragement. One of these now writes: "I wish I could make you understand how much she meant to me. I always left her with the assurance that I had been elevated. She was so thoughtful and kind, and 'tided me over' many times when I surely must have given up had she not come to me".

Nor was her service to the patients who were her charge and care in any sense perfunctory or measured by the limit of her duty. The poor always appealed to her sympathies. One of the graduates of the hospital and one of her own classmates writes: "The poor women were desperately sick and their recovery seemed hopeless, and the necessary food did not tempt them. RUTH would tempt them with delicacies which she brought and urged upon them that they might gain strength. She could not see them discharged from the hospital to rely upon themselves, but sought them out in their homes, or, where they had no homes, sought homes for them and kept watch over them in her spare hours. \* \* \* All through her hospital course, unselfish for herself, thoughtfulness for others pursued her, and this did not cease with their leaving the hospital. I have gone with her, after her long, hard day's duty was over, to a distant part of the city, to which she went to take medicine to the poor cripple, a former patient of hers, whom she also aided in efforts to gain a scanty support for herself with needlework; and she would take of the work of that poor girl and spend her time and efforts among her friends, in seeking to sell her handiwork for her thus to assist her."

The fallen girls who sometimes were her patients she did not cease to pity when they had left the hospital, and she sought them in their humble homes and strengthened them and by practical aid and sympathy and encouragement helped them to flee from sin and vice, that they might not fall again, and not a few now testify that she saved them from disgraceful lives.

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During the probationary weeks, each one on trial is assigned to the charge of some member of an upper class. The faultfinding with such a candidate, for inaccurate or slighting work, was no pleasant task to her, and the words of one of those who occupied such relation to her will testify of that spirit: "Had it not been for RUTH's lovely interest and encouraging words which she spoke to me in so many hard places and while at so many trying tasks I should have given it up and abandoned the whole thing. \* \* \* I think very few can realize or know how deeply her almost silent influence for good affected my daily life in the hospital".

Nor were the influence and encouragement and kind words only for her own probationers. Since she passed away words have come to us from many others, some now in the higher classes, and some graduate nurses, of the encouragement, influence and example she was to them, and one of them now writes, "without these I could not have succeeded in the trial, and to her kindly words and encouragement and lovely influence I am indebted for my success and my place to-day".

During her course in the Nurses' Training School she contracted a contagious disease, and was prostrated for many weeks on a bed of dangerous sickness. Where she contracted it no one knows. With all the care and precautions of the hospital it is apparent it was not there. But from her interest in the poor the suspicion naturally arises that in her visitations to humble homes, in her work of sympathy, she was exposed to the contagion. Recovering from this sickness of months, other months of recuperation succeeded and she returned to her duty, and was graduated in June, 1903, fourth in standing in a large class; but to complete her pledged service of three full years she continued in the hospital work until the following winter, and then took a needed rest, during which she was able, away from home, to visit relatives and friends whom she had not seen for years. But she was not to be at ease, for letters from the superintendent of nurses called for her assistance until she yielded and returned in March, 1904, to the hospital as a head nurse, continuing her work until the first of June, and on the fourth day of

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that month she sailed for Europe with her parents and two of her sisters. She returned September 21, and soon after again sought to revive old friendships with relatives and friends so long interrupted; but again letters from the superintendent of nurses at the hospital followed her, and she was importuned to return to the work at that post.

It had long been her intent and desire to devote herself to the suffering poor, and there now faced her the question of determining for life the sphere of her duty. In a long conference with her mother the whole matter was canvassed. The work of a nurse among the poor of her own city of Yonkers was presented, but her mother argued that there she would necessarily meet competition with other nurses who needed the compensation she did not need, and that was a large consideration in her unselfish weighing of the matter. It also was suggested to her again that in the slum work among the poor of New York City she would be in the way of others who needed the compensation which she did not need, and that again appealed to her. Then the call to the hospital was considered. That she was wanted there told the story that her work and ability were recognized. That she was practically offered any sphere of work there which she should choose also gratified her. She was assured that her father would provide for all her wants wherever she should go. All these considerations were weighed by her, and she determined to return to the hospital as a head nurse, choosing her work in the women's surgical wards, as she had been offered the choice of her place, planning to return there on the first of January to remain at least five months.

But all her hopes for further and long usefulness here in this world were destined to defeat. On the Sunday before Christmas came the terrible information that she had somewhere breathed in the seeds of a dread and deadly disease. The shock was as out of a clear sky to all of us. Could it have been less to her, for she was surrounded with happiness and cheer in that happy holiday season, without suspicion of any impending ill? It was not strange that she suffered somewhat with the shock, not because she dreaded the

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possible prospect, but because it suddenly brought to naught all her cherished hopes of devoting her life to others.

Whence this catastrophe had come, like that of her earlier illness, no one probably will ever know. No known place or occasion of exposure to its contagion could be recalled. It is true that during the recent three months of recreation she had repeatedly fallen upon sickness and suffering, and, as was her nature, had given herself up to the work of nursing the sick, and at least once after her last return from Europe her devoted and skilful help had been the means of saving the life of a dear sick one. While in Europe she had also visited hospitals in many cities to observe their arrangements and methods and their work. But where had been the place of danger to her no one could tell. It seems now that the exposure must have been, can only have been, where charity called, and in some lowly place where disease lurked, and where she went to find and help the needy and the suffering.

During that week before Christmas, notwithstanding all she knew of her danger, she was active both in and out of doors in the preparation for its joys, and spent much time in making ready her own gifts for loved ones. She rode and drove with, and had entertainment with friends, who, as we thought, would only be separated from her for a short time at most. To her great joy, Miss Maxwell, from the hospital, spent the afternoon and evening of the Friday of that week with her. How little they thought what a few days more would bring. On the Saturday of that week, the next day, without a note of warning came a suddenly critical moment, and she was then for the first time laid upon a sick bed. One after another came new tell-tale events of awful distress to those who so dearly loved her, all of which she met with a courage and peace that astonished them all. The days wore on, full of anxiety but not given up by us to despair, for we hoped against hope. They were days of trouble to us but of peace to her. For the first few days her two sisters had devoted themselves to the care of the loved sufferer, but the heart is stronger than the nerves and the head, and sympathy and love more than offsets judgment and discretion. In that trial, one after the other, two





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trained graduate nurses were summoned and were sent by Miss Maxwell. They need not be called by name. One was her own classmate, the other a member of the class just before her. Shall we ever forget them? Never. Their devoted and lovely attention was more than natural. Their watching was tireless; their cheer to her and to us was beyond measure. Will they ever forget the patient, lovely sufferer? They will not. They have found places in our hearts and home for all time which they only can fill.

Early that week, the last week of the year, on a visit to her bedside her father had said, that we should do all we could for her; that we expected her to get well again; but she must, to her utmost, help and make a strong fight herself. This she promised him to do. We wonder now if it was to that fight she referred when she said to him on the last day of her life, "Father, I am afraid it has not panned out well."

On Friday, January 13, her situation had changed much, and a consultation of physicians was had that morning, and the hopelessness of her condition was disclosed. She was brave, oh, so brave! When the doctors had left her she turned to her lovely nurses and asked to know about it. Their hearts naturally forbade them to tell her all; and later, suspecting the truth, she turned to them and referring to the physician asked, "What did he say?" And later, "Girls, it isn't fair, I think I ought to know; don't you?" And she was told only that she was not so well. But after a moment, realizing the whole truth, she looked into the face and pressing the hand of the nurse, who was scarce able to conceal her tears, said, "Don't cry, dearie; I am so glad I won't live now to be an invalid. Oh, I'm so happy!" One of her nurses, distressed at RUTH's coughing, said to her, "I would like to get down in your place and breathe a little while for you," and she reached up her hand and patting the arm of the nurse said, "That kind of a wish shows you are a real nurse."

Those three days before the end were bitter days to all but RUTH. To her they were as calm and full of intelligent realization as were any days of her life. On that Saturday when her mother sat by her side and talked with her of her going first of all of us, and

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commended her to her dear Lord, and gave her messages of love to her two dear brothers, now more than ten years in Heaven, RUTH spoke, oh, so calmly and peacefully of her going, and of her only regret as she said that her "life had been so incomplete." Her mother sought to dispel that thought by telling her of how every member of the family had the night before gathered around the fireside in the library, and without any conscious concert had recalled her numberless sweet and helpful acts all through her life for each one, and not only for them, but for all within her reach, and how her own tireless and devoted and skilful work had saved two lives in the household, and that we all measured hers as a complete and full life, without an opportunity for doing good to others unfulfilled, and that the good Lord who was taking her away from us was taking her to Himself, where He had more for her to do for Him in higher walks. "Well, mother," said she, "I am glad to go, and I am glad I am not to live a life of invalidism." How much she must have pondered over the whole matter during her few days of sickness.

To her father's assurance that the dear Lord would make it a short separation, and that he, himself, would be the next, and would soon follow, she replied begging him not to think so; that he must live on for the others, but he told her, "It was only a little while and we would all cross to be again together, for it was like a little ocean on which our ships were continually crossing, and that she was but taking one a little earlier, but the ship he would take would follow soon."

One after another on that Saturday afternoon and evening she had seen and talked with her father and mother and her brothers and her sisters all, and in the early evening one of the nurses asked her if there was any one else she wanted to see. True womanhood has most intense affection. There had been assigned to her care in the hospital as a probationer a young and gentle girl, who was possessed with the same infatuation to know all that it means to be a nurse which has captivated so many of the nicest girls of our land, who

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need it not for the sake of gain. She was one of such. In her visits home RUTH had talked of her, and first of her fears that the probationary trials would be too much for her and that she would fail of acceptance, and later said that she had changed her mind, and that her young friend was showing real perseverance and grit in it all, and would surely succeed. Since RUTH has gone the lovely girl has told us that it was RUTH's fine example and tender words of encouragement which enabled her to stand the tests, and that to her she owes her success, for she did succeed. In the hospital life of those two sweet spirits grew the deepest affection between them. And on that Saturday evening after we had one after the other all talked with RUTH, when the nurse asked her if there was any one else she would like to see, she said if it was possible that she would like to see that young nurse again. The telephone call was instantly made to the hospital, and within a little more than an hour her young friend stood at her bedside. The fellowship of affection can not be written. She did not leave RUTH until RUTH had left us all. Fellowship of affliction is deep and lasting, and RUTH's friend has a place in our hearts and home for life.

Her grandfather began a Sabbath on earth, and it passed into the Heavenly Sabbath that never ended. Each of her two brothers left us on Sunday to begin to live the eternal Heavenly Sabbath. Those recollections were revived with us when Sunday, January 15, opened, and we could but think that RUTH too might leave us on that Lord's day. The hours went on with us in tears and grief. Not so with that dear one—"God's own child," as her younger brother called her as he came from her bedside. Her courage and her calmness and her readiness and her desire to be at rest in the Everlasting Arms was supreme, and as each of us saw her radiant but calm face from time to time that day, her peace and satisfaction and desire to be away was beyond writing of. Her mother, the strongest and calmest of us all, will never lose the memory of her moments with her that day when she read to her the comforting words.

Her never-ceasing thoughtfulness for others did not forsake her at

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any time during her illness. From the first of it to the very last she was tenderly solicitous for the sleep and the rest the nurses should have, and appreciating the grief of those near to her who so loved her and whom she loved, she continually asked about them and gave directions what they should do, just as though she were nursing them herself. Particularly for her mother, whom she called by her pet name, "Dear Mammy," was she most solicitous. And as her father was about to come to her bedside she asked to be raised on her pillows that she might not look so ill, saying, "I don't want to cough while he is here."

Her elder brother will not soon forget the hour he spent at her bedside and read, as she asked, God's words, and knelt and mingled his prayers with hers on the last afternoon she was with us.

It was on that last Sunday that she asked her elder sister to get paper and write, and then she made mention of her personal treasures and to whom she desired to give each one. Nor did she forget in the act those poor girls she had rescued from sin and infamy, who were even in those closing hours of life yet on her heart, and with wishes for their welfare she mentioned articles of her clothing she soon would need no more which she wanted them to have, as she gave their names and addresses.

It was in the room in which she was born from which she was passing away, of which her mother had that day spoken of to her as the room in which she came to us when God gave her to us, and from which now He was taking her from us to Himself. And even in that last Sunday morning she told the nurses, how she loved that room, from which she was going home; that it was the room in which she was born, which had become hers; how she loved it; how it was furnished for her just as she had chosen, and how she loved each article there. She talked to them of the ornaments which adorned it, of whence she had gathered many of them in her travels in Europe and other lands, and of how she had herself arranged them all. How she loved the sunlight as it came in the south windows in sunshiny days during her sickness! That room is a sanctuary now to us.

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"When death is coming near,  
When thy heart shrinks in fear,  
And thy limbs fail,  
Then raise thy hands and pray  
To Him who smooths thy way  
Through the dark vale.

"See'st thou the eastern dawn?  
Hear'st thou in the red morn  
The Angel's song?  
Oh! lift thy drooping head,  
Thou who in gloom and dread,  
Hast lain so long.

"Death comes to set thee free,  
Oh meet him cheerily,  
As thy true friend;  
And all thy fears shall cease,  
And in eternal peace  
Thy penance end."

The first two stanzas of that Song of the Pilgrim was not the story of RUTH, for her heart shrank not from the vale and the river, nor had she any gloom or dread. She longed for and welcomed the messenger to take her home. Before the dawn came she was set free.

Just as that Sunday went out, and the next day was scarce begun, the end came and God took her to Himself. How glad a translation and a rest to her! How she welcomed that going home, to eternal rest! There were no fears for her. Hers is eternal peace. Her penance ended in eternal life. New service is hers and her ministry of love is continued in the Celestial Country.

We wonder if her example of sweet, helpful living for others and of self-forgetfulness shall be a lost example, or shall bear fruit in others who knew her. Will her place here as a minister for good to others be always vacant? Will any of those who employ their time and find their only joys in the second-rate amusements and diversions which attract them now find in her beautiful and self-effacing, devoted life of modest, untrumpeted service and ministry for the poor and the suffering, an incentive to do themselves as she

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did, and carry on her work in her place and stead, assured of the more blessed reward, the sense of the heart-satisfying satisfaction of doing as she learned from the Christ to do, in "going about doing good" to the poor, the fallen, the outcast, the sick and the suffering; and in the quiet way that gets no applause here on earth, but surely will in the Better Land receive the words of the King, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these."



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### The Funeral of Miss Ruth Havens Prime

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"The funeral took place in the First Presbyterian Church of Yonkers on Wednesday morning, January 18. There was a large assembly of relatives and friends upon the lovely winter day. Six ministers sat in the pulpit, which was covered with wreaths and roses and lilies. Two of her favorite hymns, 'Christian Dost Thou See Them' and 'Jerusalem, the Golden,' were sung by the congregation; prayers were offered by Rev. Mr. Underhill, the Rector of St. John's Episcopal Church, and by the Rev. Dr. Burrell, of the Reformed Church. The scripture selected by her father was read by the Pastor, Rev. Dr. Stevenson, who also made a tender and appreciative address. Other addresses were made by the Rev. Professor Fagnani, of Union Theological Seminary; the Rev. James McLeod, D. D., of Scranton, Pa., and the Rev. David J. Burrell, D. D., of the Marble Collegiate Church, which three had known her intimately almost from her very childhood; and the Rev. Dr. George F. Pentecost, D. D., who had been her pastor for about five years before her entrance into the Nurses' Training School, pronounced the benediction. The services were most comforting and sympathetic, and the family bore their dead to their burial plot in the Cemetery of the Evergreens, in the afternoon."

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## Selected Scripture Readings

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### *Hebrews 12, 9-13:*

9 Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected *us*, and we gave *them* reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

10 For they verily for a few days chastened *us* after their own pleasure; but he for *our* profit, that *we* might be partakers of his holiness.

11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

12 Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;

13 And make straight paths for your feet.

### *1. Peter 1, 3-9:*

3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten *us* again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:

7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

8 Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

9 Receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls.

### *1. John 3, 2:*

2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him: for we shall see him as he is.

### *1. Corinthians 13, 12:*

12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

### *Psalms 17, 15:*

15 As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.



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*John 14, 2 and 3:*

2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also.

*Revelations 3, 5:*

5 He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

*Revelations 14, 2 and 3:*

2 And I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:

3 And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.

*Revelations 21, 23-26:*

23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb *is* the light thereof.

24 And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

25 And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

26 And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.

*Revelations 22, 3-5:*

3 And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:

4 And they shall see his face; and his name *shall be* in their foreheads.

5 And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.



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## Addresses

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Rev. W. P. Stevenson, D. D.

DEAR FRIENDS.—We have come into this house of prayer to pay our tribute of love and honor to a rarely beautiful and unselfish life. When I think of how her health was broken and her strength was spent, it seems to me that in a very true and very real sense it may be said of her as it was said of the Master she so tenderly loved and so unswervingly followed, "She saved others, but herself she could not save." The world would say, I suppose, that her life was short and that death had come to her untimely; but we should remember that "We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths; in feelings, not in figures on the dial. We should count time by heart throbs. He most lives who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best."

Measured by such a standard her life was long, fully rounded and complete, and though the space it occupied in time was not large, yet in the motives that controlled it, in the devotion that animated it, and in the spirit that inspired it, it was splendidly, divinely great. For

"It is not growing like a tree  
In bulk, doth make man better be;  
Or standing long, an oak, three hundred years,  
To fall, a log at last, dry, bald and sere.  
A lily of a day, is fairer far in May,  
Although it fall and die that night,  
It was the plant and flower of light.  
In small proportions we just beauties see  
And in short measures life may perfect be."

We are privileged to have with us three friends, Drs. Fagnani, McLeod and Burrell, who have known almost from its beginning the life of this noble woman now called to a higher service, and they will speak to us out of the fullness of their knowledge and affectionate sympathy.

## Ruth Havens Prime

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Rev. Charles D. Fagnani, D.D.

This is a soldier's funeral!

That means sadness, for it is a funeral. But it also means exultation, for it is the giving of the last honors to one who was a warrior. When her name is pronounced at the roll-call the answer will come, "Died on the field of honor!" She called it "Dying in harness", for it was all planned that she should have gone back to the hospital January 1 to take up the coveted work of a head nurse.

We think of soldiers as men arrayed in barbaric trappings whose mission is to kill. Hers was the pure white uniform, symbolic of tender helpfulness and healing.

The conventional soldier's business is to fight an equal foe, flesh and blood like himself. She had been trained for three strenuous years to grapple at the bedside with the King of Terrors. An unequal fight, forsooth! What can a frail girl do against such odds? And yet not once, not twice, did she drive him baffled from his prey. He has had the last word, however, it would seem, for we who loved her are to-day gathered about the pallid face that we shall see no more under the sun.

But, O, death, where is thy victory?

Are her three years of arduous preparation in the training school then gone for naught? Little do we realize the infinite possibilities of service in the larger life to which she has been promoted, if we imagine that she is not all the better equipped by that hospital discipline for her Master's errands.

And yet she ought not to have died. Her dying was premature, and premature deaths ought not to be; and the time will surely come when by reason of better understanding of the ways of God, which we call the laws of nature, and of more intelligent and widespread social conformity thereto, death out of due time will be the rare exception.

She leaves a great void in our hearts, for she was very sweet and gentle, and helpful and unselfish, and such are all too few in this

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sad world; that there should now be one less means a great deal for all who came within the reach of her beautiful influence.

But it is good for us to be here, for her sealed lips are more eloquent than speech. We feel that we must live more nobly than we have heretofore attempted to do; that the second-rate things must become more despicable in our eyes; that it should be easier and pleasanter for us not to think so much of our own things, but more of the things of others, and so live in the light of the Master's presence 'that our sense of values may be adjusted to His, so that when our time shall come to lie silent in death, those who know us will thank God that we have lived.

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**Rev. James McLeod, D. D.**

MY DEAR FRIENDS.—When our hearts are breaking, and when we need a word of comfort, there are no words like the words of God. "Blessed be God, even the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Mercies, and the God of all comfort, who comforted us in all our tribulations, that we may be able to comfort them which are in trouble by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God".

It is not easy for me to speak on this occasion. To sit beside you, a silent mourner, would be more in harmony with my feelings. Our RUTH is gone—I always called her RUTH—and we are here to bear her body to the tomb. She needs no eulogy. At such a time as this one who needs a eulogy does not deserve it, and one who deserves a eulogy does not need it. RUTH PRIME came of good stock, and she had a right to be proud of her lineage. Her grandfather and her great-grandfather, like her father and mother, were devoted servants of Christ, and in her father's house she, from a child, knew the "Holy Scriptures which were able to make her wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus". And she, along with her sisters and brothers, was well-grounded in the Shorter Catechism. I recall and you too will remember some words which



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she now appreciates more than ever before. They are not words of Scripture, but they are eminently Scriptural, and they are the words of that Catechism. I have repeated them to myself hundreds of times, and I rejoice in the truths they embody. These are the words: "The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass unto glory; and their bodies being still united to Christ, do rest in their graves till the resurrection". But is that all? No, thank God, there are other, and if possible greater, blessings to follow, for "At the resurrection, believers being raised up in glory, shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted in the day of judgment, and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoying of God to all Eternity". Is not that a glorious prospect? Thank God for it!

As she grew in years, she grew in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Her piety was of a most humble type. It found expression in deeds rather than in words. She could talk well for Jesus, but she could work for Him better. If she could now speak she would, I doubt not, caution us against speaking in her praise; but I am sure she would tell us to praise her Redeemer, and to give to Him all the glory for any good thing she had been permitted to do in His name.

It has been said that her death was untimely; but I am not so sure of that. She did indeed "fall in sleep" in her young womanhood, but

"It matters not at what hour o' th' day  
The Christian falls asleep. Death can not come  
To her untimely who is fit to die.  
The less of this cold earth, the more of Heaven,  
The briefer life, the earlier immortality."

Thank God, my dear sorrowing friends, for the hope of a blessed immortality; a hope which RUTH fondly cherished and which she has now realized; and surely you will thank God again and again, through Jesus Christ our Lord, for the bright prospect of a blessed and everlasting reunion.

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My tears mingle with yours as I think of RUTH and as I say farewell! But at the same time, you and I can look through our tears, and far away beyond our tears, to the blooming fields of immortality, where her redeemed spirit now is, and where she will be "forever with the Lord".

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**Rev. David J. Burrell, D. D.**

It is the glory of the Gospel that it brings life and immortality to light; and in so doing it solves the mystery of death. In the philosophy of the Gospel death is not the end but the beginning of life. The life which we are living here and now is not really life at all but only preparation for it. The days of our years on earth, whether less or more than threescore years and ten, are probationary; they are merely an apprenticeship for something beyond. Death is a line of shadow falling across our path, signifying that our probation is ended and our character fixed; we step across that line and go living right on.

We are accustomed to think of a short life as an incomplete life. We forget that the life of the Lord Jesus was scarce longer than that life of service of her, the dear one who has just left us and gone on before us. And yet of His own life He said, "It is finished". As the days go by and we learn more and more of and recall her work of faith, and of her doing for, and of love for others who suffered, and to whom she ministered and loved to minister, we shall find out and realize more and more that her short life was not incomplete, and though it was not trumpeted, she was so modest in all her work, it was so sincere and so helpful and so eminently useful that hers was a life fully rounded out and complete and finished. And it was so full of example for those who knew her; such an incentive for others to be like her and be up and doing.

But her work of preparation, as we thought, for usefulness here was not for the world only, little as we are able to see how she can be spared from it.



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The cry of Jesus, "It is finished," meant that the foundations were laid for a kingdom whose superstructure has ever since been going up. Thus the death of a Christian is merely an advance to larger tasks and responsibilities. Our young friend who devoted her life to labors of love has received the *service chevron*. Had she been summoned by the surgeon-general of our country for assignment to duty at the front, her friends would have rejoiced in the honor conferred upon her. But greater things are hers! She has been promoted by her Divine Lord to a place among those choice spirits of whom it is written, "Are they not sent forth to minister unto such as are heirs of salvation?" There must needs be grief in the separation; but those who loved her will rejoice in her call to come up higher. The schooling which she had in the wards of the hospital and among the destitute people of the slums must be of immeasurable value in the larger ministrations of mercy to which her Master has now called her.

And two things remain—memory and hope. We shall not forget her gracious face, her winning voice, her kindly hands. They will stimulate us to nobler living and emphasize anew the value of the gospel which made her what she was, and better still, made her what she is. And we shall meet again. "We do not sorrow as others who have no hope." The day of the home-bringing will come, a day of reunion, of handclasping, of "knitting severed friendships up". All the bright days of earth rolled into one could not equal the happiness of that day.

"As for thy friends, they are not lost.  
The several vessels of thy fleet,  
Though sundered far, by tempest tossed,  
Shall safely in the harbor meet."

Wherefore comfort one another with these words, "In my Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you."

And let us live as those who realize the importance of these years so fraught with possibility touching the eternal hereafter. We are climbing the steps of the Temple of Life, under burdens that oft-

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times seem heavier than we can bear ; presently we shall stand at the threshold, where a bright angel who is sometimes strangely called " The King of Terrors ", will roll back the great gates and bid us come in and begin to live. The friends we leave behind may weep, like the elders of Ephesus who thought they should see the face of Paul no more ; but though " weeping endure for the night, joy cometh in the morning ". They will rejoice with joy unspeakable when the veil is lifted and they know all.

Till then, dear friend, farewell. Nay rather, *Auf wiedersehen*—" until we meet again ".



# Ruth Havens Prime

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## Obituary Notices

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[From the Bulletin of First Presbyterian Church of Yonkers, Jan. 22, 1905.]

Since our last communion one of our younger members, Miss RUTH HAVENS PRIME, after a life of notable heroism and self-effacing service, has passed from us into the immortality of joy. May her inspiring example be the means of quickening a nobler life, a deeper devotion and a more sympathetic spirit of helpfulness in us all.

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[The New York Observer, January 19, 1905.]

RUTH HAVENS PRIME, beloved daughter of Elder Ralph E. Prime, of Yonkers, fell asleep at her home, surrounded by the tender ministry of those who loved her dearly, in the flower of her age, on January 16. Ever sweet and serious as a child, the beautifully religious atmosphere of her home wrought its natural result, and she found herself more and more averse, as she grew up, to a life of aimless, self-centered society amusements.

With brave determination, yearning to be of service in the world, she succeeded in entering the Training School of the Presbyterian Hospital, in this city. The searching discipline of this experience brought out into still clearer light the beauties of her character. Her heart went forth in yearning sympathy to the sorrows of her patients. She bore their griefs. Her care for them did not end with their dismissal from the hospital, but followed them outside and took the form of moral and spiritual and practical solicitude. She visited them, and found work for them, and made their paths straight. Wise and practical she was as well as kind; wholesome and pointed could be her words of admonition to the wayward. Yet she was not as strong physically as she needed to be. Illness baffled her at times, but her resolution carried her through, her one dread being lest she should fail to be graduated and be compelled to give up the glorious career to which she seemed predestined.

At length the three strenuous years were passed, and she was graduated among the first in her class, and foremost in the affections of all her companions and teachers. Then came the rest and change of a trip to Europe, beyond which gleamed brightly the goal of return to the hospital as a head nurse, for such was her desire, and such Miss Maxwell's cherished purpose.

But the Heavenly Father's plan was a better one. The Master needed her for more glorious service in one of His other mansions. The pagan symbol for such a life would be a broken column; we, who sorrow not as those who have no hope, see in it a Heaven aspiring flame returning to its source. When the hemorrhages began so suddenly, and she was stricken down, she knew only too well what it meant. Her fear now was lest she should recover only to

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live as an invalid, requiring to be ministered unto, instead of ministering, and so she was glad to go, since she could no longer be of use here.

Conscious and clear-minded almost to the very last hour, she was troubled by the thought that perhaps she had been headstrong and unwise after all in insisting on a nurse's career; did not the event seem to show it? The mother's heart divined the shadow, and the mother's voice brought balm inexpressible as it rehearsed in those dying ears what the daughter's trained skill had done for her own family, reminded her of those two lives saved in sudden emergencies, and of other minor but important ministries within the home circle. And so the three years of devoted study had not been so fruitless after all!

As she lay propped up against the pillows the wealth of her dark curls framing the sweet and child-like, but oh so pallid face, waiting quietly for the rising of the gentle tide that was to bear her safe across the Bar, her thoughts following the grooves of life-long habit were only for others, insisting that the nurses should have rest, that her visitors should not stand. And so in spite of tear-dimmed eyes we thank the Heavenly Father for the Christian home, and the Christian hospital, and the Christ-like spirit promoted to the reward of grander possibilities in her Saviour's service and closer contact with His love.

C. P. F.

700 Park avenue, New York.

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[The Presbyterian, February 1, 1905.]

Early in the morning of January 16, 1905, after a brief illness, Miss RUTH HAVENS PRIME, second daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ralph E. Prime, passed away at the home of her parents, in Yonkers, N. Y. She was in the thirty-first year of her age, and had been born and brought up in the midst of the people of the city of her birth, where she had become loved and respected.

She was educated at the Yonkers High School and Miss Bliss's Academy, completing her studies at Evelyn College, in Princeton, N. J. Early in life she formed the purpose of devoting herself to the work of nursing. She entered the Training School of the Presbyterian Hospital in the fall of 1900: she completed her course, and was graduated in June, 1903, being the fourth in a large class. Returning to the hospital as a head nurse, she had charge of one of the surgical wards until the following summer, when she took a leave of absence to accompany her parents upon a trip to Europe.

It was her expectation to return to her work with the beginning of the present year as a head nurse in the Presbyterian Hospital in New York City, but before the time arrived she was stricken with the disease which resulted in her death—the seeds of which were undoubtedly contracted by the strain and exposure of her hospital life.

Her life, though short in years, was rich in usefulness and accomplishment. A devoted Christian, she leaves behind her a blessed memory of devotion to duty and unselfish ministration to others. She never ceased to follow up the poor who were under her care, and not a few of those whom she nursed she rescued from paths of sin and vice. Of her it may truly be said: Her works do follow her.

## Ruth Havens Prime

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[The Westminster, February 4, 1905.]

Death has called away the daughter of General Ralph E. Prime, of Yonkers, MISS RUTH HAVENS PRIME. Thoughtful and serious as a child, as she matured she found no relish in aimless and superficial society life and gave three strenuous years toward fitting herself to engage in hospital work. She graduated with honor, but soon disease manifested itself and nothing could arrest its progress and so, though richly prepared to render earthly service, the Master had need of her at once, and called her to Himself. Would that many young people would cherish the high ideals she aimed to reach.

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[The Sunday School Times, February 4, 1905.]

Life is given us to be spent, not saved. Yet whenever a particularly fruitful life passes out from this world suddenly, because spent gloriously, there are always some to talk about it as a "mistake" that should not have been allowed to happen, because it might perchance have been prevented if the life had been more selfishly guarded instead of so lavishly given for others. Such a life and death as that of RUTH HAVENS PRIME, the daughter of General Ralph E. Prime, of Yonkers, New York, who, in her thirty-first year, has just entered upon a still richer life beyond, was of this sort. Some years ago she determined to devote herself to the work of nursing. Entering upon the strict discipline and training of that work, she was graduated in 1903 fourth in a large class of students. As a head nurse in the Presbyterian Hospital of New York she was placed in charge of one of the surgical wards, where, after a leave of absence last summer, she had expected to continue in her chosen service at the beginning of this year. But before the time arrived she was stricken with a disease undoubtedly contracted during the strain and exposure of her hospital life, and in a few short weeks she had succumbed. Yet her brief ministry was marked with a richness of service that is not measured by time. She had devoted herself to the spiritual needs, as well as the physical, of those whom she could help. She rescued some from lives of sin. And in it all she forgot self and danger to self. There is no mistake in the spending of such a life. Its thirty years count more for the coming of the kingdom than three score years of self-protected existence.

















